Z.11.71

A SERMON

PREACHED

AUGUST the 19*th*, 1684.

AT THE

CONSECRATION

OF THE

Lord Weymouth's Chapel

IN

LONG-LEAT.

BIBL. CA... A...

By *RICHARD RODERICK*, B. D.
Vicar of *Blandford-Forum* in *Dorsetshire.*

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TO

The Right Honourable

THOMAS, Lord Thynne,

BARON of *Warmiſter*,

VISCOUNT *Weymouth*, &c.

My Lord,

THough Conſcious to my ſelf, that the bare Seaſonableneſs of the following Diſcourſe, and the accidentally-ſtraitned Preparation of him that ſpake it, might, to a Candid Audience, palliate the Faults of the haſty Com-

A *poſure,*

poſure, and render that acceptable from the Pulpit, which may juſtly be exploded when coming from the Preſs; yet, having broke thorough theſe and other Diſcouragements, I now humbly preſent to your Lordſhip this mean Attendant at the Conſecration of your Chappel at Long Leat. That your Lordſhip ſhould command me upon ſo ſolemn an Occaſion to Preach the Sermon, was an amazing Honour: That the Publication of it ſhould be thought of, was a greater Aſtoniſhment to me. But I perceive, that the Favours of the truly great, and the Divinely good, have always ſomething of Tranſcendency in them; like the Influences of Heaven, are freely and unexpectedly ſhowred down, not poorly barter'd for. While others require them, which are imbarked in their Dependance, to ſtudy their

Paſſions, not their Honour, to be more ſolicitous to conſider their Nature, to feed their Humours, than to doe them any real Advantage; and always rack, and often defeat the moſt reaſonable expectations, or perhaps at length hardly part with their Kindneſſes to thoſe that have dearly bought them: Your Lordſhip and your Relations (I ſpeak experimentally) ſurprize *with your Favours, ſcorn to have them at all (much leſs thus baſely)* earn'd, *but liberally beſtow, before any particular Service hath* deſerved *them. Hence the utmoſt Performances of your Dependants are a'ready overpaid, ſooner than begun; are but the unequal return of a ſtrict* Debt, *which no future Endeavours can* fully *diſcharge, ſince the Circumſtance of* un-engaged, *and* firſt *obliging, will ever be only on your Parts.* That

That God would enable thoſe which ſhare your Bounties, to anſwer the Deſigns of them, to be uſefull in their Stations; and that he would be pleaſed both Temporally and Eternally to bleſs your Lordſhip, and your Family, is the Hearty Prayer of

Your Lordſhips

Moſt Devoted Servant,

Richard Roderick.

A SERMON

Preached at

LONG-LEAT IN WILT-SHIRE.

August 19. 1684.

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2 Chron. 7. 16.

Now have I chosen and sanctified this House, that my Name may be there for ever, and mine Eyes and mine Heart shall be there perpetually.

GOD spake these words in a Vision to *Solomon*, presently after his building and Dedication of the Temple at *Jerusalem*: A mighty work *de-*

ſigned by King *David*; but the Honour of *effecting* it was reſerved for the greateſt and wiſeſt of Men. Only the chief Ornament of his *Father's* Houſe is fit, and ſingled out to lay the Foundation of the *Lord's*.

2 Chron. 6. 18. *But will God in very deed dwell with Men upon the Earth? Behold, Heaven, and the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain him*; *how much leſs* an Earthly Tabernacle?

Acts 7. 48, 49. *The moſt High dwelleth not in Temples made with hands, as ſaith the Prophet, Heaven is my Throne, and Earth is my Foot-ſtool: what Houſe will ye build me, ſaith the Lord? Or what is the Place of my Reſt?*

'Tis true, the Almighty fills all Places, is circumſcribed by none: His Divinity cannot be pent up; yet he vouchſafes to ſtoop his Glorious Majeſty, and after a *peculiar manner* to be preſent in the Congregation of his Saints. The God-Head cannot be ſhrunk up within any Dimenſions; but his Honour is ſaid eſpecially to *dwell* in the Temple, the Place ſet apart for his more immediate ſervice; on which is engraven, as * upon the

*Ex. 28. 36.

Plate

Plate on the fore-front of *Aaron's* Mitre, *Holineſs unto the Lord.* And of every ſuch Place ſeparated for God's publick Worſhip, himſelf ſpeaks, *Now have I choſen and ſanctified this Houſe, that my Name may be there for ever, and mine Eyes and mine Heart ſhall be there perpetually.*

Which words, I humbly conceive, may be thus paraphraſed; I accept and approve of this Houſe, which, according to my will, and by my ſecret ſuggeſtion, is Choſen and Sanctified, or ſeparated from common Uſes to the Honour of my Name, to be mine for ever; and I promiſe, that *mine Eyes and mine Heart ſhall be there perpetually*, that I will have a particular regard to the Devotions there paid, and be affectionately gratious to each Votary that religiouſly offers them.

For your preſent Meditation, be pleaſed to conſider,

1. That through all Ages, Men out of a ſenſe of Duty have *Choſen and Sanctified*, that is, ſeparated from common Uſes, and ſolemnly ſet apart, *Places* for the publick Worſhip of God.

 2. That

2. That God allows, yea, requires ſuch *Places* to be *Choſen and Sanctified*, or ſolemnly ſet apart for his publick Worſhip, to the Honour of his Name.

3. That if Men will be ſincerely devout in ſuch *Places* (but not otherwiſe) God promiſes, that his *Eyes and his Heart ſhall be there perpetually*; He will have a particular Regard to the Devotions there paid, and be affectionately gratious to each Votary that religiouſly offers them.

Theſe Particulars diſcuſt, I ſhall make a very brief Application.

Of the *two former*, jointly to raiſe our Devotion, when we come into the Lord's Houſe;

Of the *laſt*, to quicken our Faith, that he will hear and anſwer the devout Petitions which we there make.

1. Through all Ages Men out of a ſenſe of Duty have *Choſen and Sanctified*, that is, ſeparated from common Uſes, and ſolemnly ſet apart, *Places* for the publick Worſhip of God.

Whoever own the Being of a God, muſt acknowledge that he ought to be Wor-

Worſhipped: He that made, ſuſtains, and preſerves us, has a Right to the utmoſt ſervices we can pay him. And ſince it is hard for Earthly-minded Men to be taken off their ſenſual Delights, and to fix their ſcattered Thoughts upon Religious Duties, the beſt Expedient to diſmiſs the World for a time, the Concerns, and Love of it, is to have recourſe to Holy *Places*; which, being ſeparated from common Uſes, will repreſent nothing to interrupt Acts of Piety, and, being dedicated to the Almighty's Honour, will in ſome meaſure diſplay his Majeſty, ſtamp in Men laſting Impreſſions of Reverence, and heighten Devotion.

A Truth this ſo certain, ſo clear, that the Light of Nature taught it. The Notices of a God, and of his being to be thus publickly Worſhipt, were imbibed together.

Men ſometimes were not fully perſwaded of a great Super-intendent over the Creation; were pleaſed with the Fancy, that Chance threw the World into, and continues it in this curious Order: but

the Creature proving the Creator, and ſucceſſive, precarious, inſufficient Beings inferring a firſt, independent and Almighty; as ſoon as convinced that there was a God, the very *Heathens* built Altars, erected Temples (many whereof very famous and magnificent) and by their Sacrifices, Purgations, and other Rites *there* uſed, teſtified an awfull veneration of the Deity. Reaſon, though but little improved, inſtructed them in that Religious Practice.

And indeed, however they fatally erred concerning the Nature of God, whoſe Eſſence they deſtroyed by dividing it; and many of their Myſteries were moſt profane, greater, more bare-fac'd Impurities being countenanced and practiſed to appeaſe Heavens Wrath, than had been before acted to provoke it: however their Sacred Offices were always ill directed, often wickedly performed; yet their beautifull Structures in Honour of falſe Gods will riſe up in judgment againſt ſome ſlovenly Worſhippers of the true One. Thoſe Strangers to the Commonwealth

of

of *Iſrael*, in this the higheſt *outward* expreſſion of Reverence, as far might be acted up ſuitably to the Circumſtances of feeble Manhood, and the Majeſty of the inconceivable God-head. Nay (which is very remarkable) their Idolatry did not ſo far deſecrate the Places polluted by it, but that the Lord of Hoſts did ſometimes ſhew himſelf terrible in his vengeance towards thoſe, which Sacrilegiouſly deſtroyed, or rudely defiled them.

Alexander ab Alexandro, and others, give particular accounts of the Heathen Temples, and the manner of their ſolemn Conſecrations. But leaving them, I rather proceed to trace the more authentick practice of the Worſhippers of the *true God*.

Reaſon and Religion (though the one weakned, the other decayed by *Adam*'s Fall) gave early Inſtructions to his Poſterity, that they ſhould *preſent* their *Bodies* alſo *a living Sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God* in his Holy Places. Such is that by learned Men ſuppoſed to have been, whither *Cain* and *Abel* brought their Offe-

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rings, *Gen.* 4. The Patriarchs (to whom God miraculouſly made known his Will by Viſions, Dreams, the Miniſtery of Angels, and in other extraordinary Manners) thought it fitteſt to ſerve him upon Conſecrated Mountains, Altars, and
Gen. 28. Groves. To *Jacob* particularly the Stone in *Bethel*, which himſelf erected by Divine Inſpiration, was the Houſe of God.

And ſo all along עַל יְמֵי תֹהוּ through the days of emptineſs, as the *Jews* ſtyle the times before the Moſaick Diſpenſation, the Sons of Men were taught by Laws *natural* impreſſed upon all, *poſitive* given to *Adam*, *Noah* and *Abraham*, whereby they and their Off-ſpring thought themſelves obliged with joint Forces to beſiege Heaven, δυσωπεῖν (ſo St. *Baſil*, and other Greek Fathers ſpeak) with holy violence to ſtraiten God, that he could not but hear, when they aſſembled to-
Pſal. 96. 9. gether, and *Worſhipped him in the Beauty of Holineſs.*

Afterwards, when out of all the Families of the Earth God had choſen him a peculiar Inheritance, and led them through

through the Wilderneſs with a mighty Hand, and an out-ſtretched Arm; his Servant *Moſes*, immediately before he went up into the Mount, where he ſaw God Face to Face, *built an Altar and twelve Pillars according to the twelve Tribes of* Iſrael, *to ſacrifice unto the Lord*, Ex. 24. And he took an Offering of all the People *to make a Sanctuary, that the Lord might dwell amongſt them*, Ex. 25. The Cloud, the Pillar of Fire, the Thundrings, the Lightnings, the Earthquake, the Mountain ſmoaking, the ſtill Voice, theſe and the like at ſundry times were occaſional Symbols of the Divine Preſence in the midſt of them: But the conſtant Seat of God's Reſidence was the Tabernacle of the Congregation, in which the Prieſts, when Sanctified, were to give attendance, *to Miniſter in the Holy Place*, Ex. 29. This was the Place of Worſhip, the Safe-guard, and the Glory of *Iſrael*, till the building of the Temple. *Before* the raiſing of which Glorious Edifice, the high Places alſo for Sacrifice, before and after, the Synagogues for Prayer and hearing the Law read, were ſet apart: of the

latter many in every City; five hundred in *Jeruſalem*, ſay the *Rabbins*.

So zealous was *David* for the Holy One of *Iſrael*, that he profeſſes (*Pſ.* 132.) *I will not give ſleep to mine Eyes, or ſlumber to mine Eye-lids, untill I find out a place for the Lord, an Habitation for the mighty God of* Jacob. He *had it in his Heart* to build an Houſe unto the Lord, *exceeding Magnificent, of Fame, and of Glory throughout all Countries*; and God applauded his Deſign, but, he being a Man of Bloud, ordered him to put off the proſecution of it to his Son: That Son, whoſe Greatneſs, and Wiſdom, for which he is renowned in all the World, were moſt ſignally evidenced by his carrying on that glorious Work; which was the Royal Palace of the King of Kings, the Wonder of the Earth, and the Tranſcript of Heaven. *There* was the daily Worſhip performed; *thither all the Tribes, the Tribes of the Lord went up* thrice every year, *to give thanks unto the Name of the Lord.* Towards *that*, at whatever diſtance, they offered their conſtant Devotions; and ſince the deſtruction

1 Chron. 22. 5.

ſtruction of it, towards the Holy Land. They heretofore had, and ſtill have, private Oratories at the top of their Houſes, called עלייה from aſcending to them.

Nay, the very *Turks* (the Ceremonial part of whoſe Religion is much according to the Jewiſh Plat-form) at firſt Worſhipped towards the Temple of *Jeruſalem*, ſince towards that of *Meccha*. Theſe Aliens from the Faith, though they deny the Lord that bought them, build ſtately Moſchs to the Glory of him that made them. So firmly rooted is it in the Minds of *all* Men, but a company of proud, ſtubborn, factious Zealots, that God accounts the Honour double, which is paid him in his own Houſe.

Let theſe things be duly laid to Heart by thoſe, who with a Phariſaical Haughtineſs thank God that they are not as other Men, who are too much Spiritualiz'd and Seraphick, to ſink their Thoughts below the Fellowſhip of the Heavenly Quire; and therefore cannot ſtoop to be charitable to, and hold Communion with their Brethren, but for their ſakes caſt off

and abhor the Houſes of the Lord, where his Glory is ſhadowed, and his favour more plentifully diſpenc'd. Let them remember that the Phariſee and the Publican, the one a Type of themſelves, the other of thoſe they ſcorn and abominate, Luke 18. *went up together to the Temple to pray.* And let them take notice moreover, that, notwithſtanding the Religious Pride of the former, the latter onely went home juſtified.

To give farther ſtrength to what has been hitherto urged, we may conſider the practice of Chriſt's *Followers*: as for his own, I ſhall ſpeak of it under another Head. They (when, as to outward Direction, left to themſelves) after our Redeemer's Paſſion, the time that the Law purely Moſaical ceaſed, yet did not forſake the chief Glory of that foregoing Diſpenſation. The Temple was ſtill their Houſe of Prayer: *They continued daily with one Accord in the Temple*, Acts 2. And being forced to abandon it by the great Perſecution at *Jeruſalem*, Acts 8. when in the Infancy of Chriſtianity God permitted

ted the Heathen to rage, the Kings of the Earth to ſet themſelves, and the Rulers to take Counſel together againſt the Lord, and againſt his Doctrine; being now debarred from the publick ſolemn Profeſſion of the Faith, they held it as they could, ſet apart for Religious Duties their ὑπερῶα, upper Rooms in their Houſes; and reſolved not to ſerve the Lord as with any thing, ſo neither in any Place, that was common or unclean; Thoſe, and the Sepulchres of Saints and Martyrs were their *choſen*, however mean, Oratories, neither applied to any other Uſes.

But when the Goſpel, like it's Author, buried in weakneſs, had imitated him by riſing again in Glory, and the true Profeſſors breath'd freely and plentifully after their late Oppreſſions, they preſently fell to honouring of God with their Subſtance which he increaſed, and, as their Circumſtances would permit, *adorned* his Worſhip. By the Favour of *Conſtantine* the Great, and other Chriſtian Princes, they founded Churches every where coſtly and magnificent. Expences of that

Nature deſervedly went under the name of Piety. Nor indeed can any, who have a due ſenſe of Religion, think it fit to put off God *cheaply*, to ſerve him with that which coſts them *nothing*. Devotion ought not to lie groveling in a *Cottage*, while Luxury vaunts it ſplendidly in a *Palace*. 'Twas the Traitor *Judas*, who bore the Bag, and thought every thing loſt which went beſide it, that murmured at the Coſt laid out in Honour of our Saviour. 'Twas the Apoſtate *Julian*'s Treaſurer, who expected to ſhare in the Sacrilegious Booty of the Churches, that complained the Veſſels of them were too rich for the Carpenters Son. Let ſuch profligate Men tremble, and be horribly afraid how they pollute the Lord's Altars, or offer the leaſt Indignity to *the Habitation of his Holineſs*. For, as I am to ſhew ſecondly,

2. God allows, yea, requires ſuch Places to be *Choſen and Sanctified*, or ſolemnly ſet apart for his publick Worſhip, to the Honour of his Name.

Among the many groſs Conceptions, which the Temptations of Satan ſuggeſt,

or

or the Impulſe of a deluded Imagination frames, concerning Almighty God, there is ſcarce any which more detracts from him, than that of thoſe, who, to avoid Superſtition, turn unmannerly and profane; leſt they ſhould run upon a *ſervile Dread*, refuſe to pay the Duty, which becomes a *filial Fear*. But God will not be thus mocked. He requires a peculiar Worſhip, and that in Places religiouſly ſet apart for the ſolemnizing of it. He will not have his Services to be proſtituted, is jealous of his Honour, and will not ſhare it in common with any of his Creatures.

Indeed all Places are alike, till ſacred Rites have ſeparated ſome to be the Lord's *Holy* Habitation: *Holy* not eſſentially, ſo only himſelf is; not by Participation, ſo are only Angels, Saints, and good Men; but relatively, as devoted to his eſpecial Service, and Means to quicken the Devotion of them that repair thither.

Here he challenges an unalienable Propriety, and ſignalizeth his being delighted with his Choſen and Sanctified Inheritance by the Judgments that he executeth upon

upon them which defile it; by pouring out his Fury, and accompliſhing his Anger upon thoſe, who, out of a miſplac'd Abhorrence of Idols, commit Sacrilege. Sacrilege, that moſt daring Impiety, which with an affected Frenzy bids Defyance to an All-knowing, and an Omnipotent God; and, however the impudently wicked Rage of theſe latter Times hath made it appear ſlight in ſome Neighbouring Nations, becauſe common, not only Acted, but Eſtabliſhed by a Law, yet is the unhappy Occaſion, which forceth a jealous God to become a conſuming Fire, and always bequeaths a Curſe, that moſt deteſtable Legacy, to the third and fourth Generation. Nay exemplary Vengeance ſeldom paſſeth by the *immediate* Offendor
Dan. 4. of this kind. When *Nebuchadnezzar* had robbed the Temple, the Invader of God's Honour loſt his own; he, who by Atheiſtical Profanations affronted the Creator, was degraded into the condition of the loweſt and the moſt ſtupid of the Crea-
Dan. 5. tures. And while his Son *Belſhazzer* triumph'd in the Spoils of the Temple, was Ca-

Carouzing in the Conſecrated Veſſels, the Hand-writing out of the Wall did ſtrike a Palſie into his Joints, trembling into his Knees, Anguiſh and Horrour into his Soul, and plainly evidenced, that the ſlaughter of the Sacrilegious Wretch the night following, was from the direct Appointment of the Lord, enraged by the Injuries done to the *Place* where his Honour dwelt.

Some of theſe *Places* God expreſly commanded to be Built and Sanctified. Such was the Tabernacle of the Congregation, which, when firſt ſet up, he ſo filled with his Glory, that *Moſes* himſelf, the Mediator at that time between the Lord and his People, *was not able to enter into it.* Ex. 40. 35.

When for forty years in the Wilderneſs the *Jews* had been guided and fed with frequent Miracles, and were about to enter into the Promiſed Land, God directly orders, *Take heed to thy ſelf, that thou offer not thy Burnt-Offerings in every Place that thou ſeeſt, but in the Place which the Lord ſhall chooſe in one of thy Tribes, there thou ſhalt offer thy Burnt-Offerings, and* Deut. 12. 13, 14.

there thou ſhalt doe all that I command thee. A Text this clear enough, one would think, to beat down the Humour, and overthrow the Credit of many amongſt us, who flie off from *Choſen and Sanctified* to common Unhallowed Houſes, notwithſtanding the United Obligations of Intereſt, Reputation, Peace, Loyalty, and Religion to the contrary; who run away to Field-Conventicles, thoſe Nurſeries of Faction and Schiſm, where the uncommiſſioned Bigots preſume to make, and endeavour to obtrude Articles of Apoſtaſie, and Principles of Rebellion.

But to return; when *the Ark of God* had long *dwelt within Curtains*, he put it into the Heart of his Servant *David* to deſign, of *Solomon* to build the glorious Temple of *Jeruſalem*; which in ſo eminent a manner became Holy to the Almighty by his Preſence there at the Conſecration of it, that *the Prieſts could not*
2 Chr. 5. 14. *ſtand to Miniſter*, and that the Children of *Iſrael*, otherwhiles a ſtubborn People, then reverently *bowed themſelves with their*
2 Chr. 7. 3. *Faces to the ground, and Worſhipped, and Praiſed*

Praiſed the Lord, ſaying, for he is good, for his Mercy endureth for ever.

Again, when by Divine Permiſſion for the Sins of the *Jews*, the *Chaldeans* had burnt this Temple, God by his Prophets *Haggai* and *Zachariah* ſtirred up *Zorobabel* to build another: which, though not ſo magnificent as the former, though not filled with ſo large a Portion of the Divine Preſence; though wanting the Urim and Thummim, the Ark of the Covenant, and the Sacred Fire that conſumed the Sacrifices; yet the Glory of the *ſecond* Temple far exceeded that of the *firſt*, becauſe under it the *Meſſiah* came. The *Meſſiah*, who, being God bleſſed for ever, frequently viſited, and gave a luſtre to this Seat of his Holineſs; called, and made it his Houſe of Prayer; and was preſent at the Feaſt of the Dedication. Wiſdom become incarnate taught, and diſputed in *it*. He, who *often* ſubmitted to our *other* Infirmities, was never known to be *angry*, but when he ſaw the Profanation of *it*. *The Zeal of his Houſe ate him up*; the unſanctifying, the putting it to common Uſes incenſed the *meek*, the

Acts 13. 41. *gentle Chriſt Jeſus. Behold ye Deſpiſers, and wonder,* and be afraid: after ſuch an Inſtance as this, wonder at the awfull Preſence, which extorted ſo warm a Concern from Dove-like Innocence, and *fills* the Holy Places; and be afraid of the graceleſs ſtupidity of thoſe that *defile*, or but *ſlightly regard* them.

To countenance their unmannerly Profaneneſs, who deny the leaſt Honour where double is due, ſome plead, that (however it were under the Jewiſh Economy, when God dealt with his People according to the hardneſs of their Hearts, yet) now, ſince the Eſtabliſhment of a purer, and more Spiritual Religion, he enjoins by his Apoſtle St. *Paul*, *that men* 1 Tim. 2. 8. *ſhould pray every where*; and our Saviour tells the *Samaritan* Woman, *the Hour was coming, when neither in that Mountain* John 4. 21, 23. (Mount *Ephraim* at *Shiloh*, where Anciently the Tabernacle, and the Ark were) *nor yet at* Jeruſalem, *Men ſhould Worſhip the Father, but ſhould Worſhip him in Spirit and in Truth.* By way of reply, we may note here, that St. *Paul* ſpeaks of *private*

private, not of *publick* Prayer: and beſides, if the latter were meant, his appointing it to be made every where, or in every place, does not forbid a particular ſeparation to Pious Uſes, does only extend the more ſolemn Worſhip of God through the whole World, beyond the narrow compaſs of *Jeruſalem*, within which it was before circumſcribed. This will be an anſwer to both the forecited Objections, which do no more prove the common indifferent Uſe of Places in the Service of the Lord, than that (*all ſhall be Prieſts of God*) does expoſe the Miniſterial Function to every preſumptuous Intruder. The ſum of the matter is: Under the Law the Prieſthood was confined to one Tribe, the true Worſhip to one Nation, but now under the *Goſpel* both are laid in common, that is, free for all; yet *that* is not to be invaded by *Perſons uncalled*, nor *this* ordinarily to be performed in publick in *Places unſanctified*, neither to be exerciſed without preceding Conſecrations. After theſe have ſolemnly ſet apart Places for Divine Service, as in my third Particular I ſhall endeavour to make out,

3. If

3. If Men will be ſincerely devout in ſuch Places (but not otherwiſe) God promiſes that his *Eyes and his Heart ſhall be there perpetually*, he will have a particular regard to the Devotions there paid, and be affectionately gratious to each Votary that religiouſly offers them.

The Happineſs of the Almighty is eſſential and immutable, not to be increaſed by our imperfect Righteouſneſs, or diminiſhed by our impotent Iniquities. Our moſt ſincere Devotions *delight* the Lord indeed, but *affect* our ſelves, we only receive the Benefit. The Sacrifices of a broken Spirit go up as Incenſe with a ſweet-ſmelling ſavour to the Lord, but ſhowres of Mercies are return'd for them, eſpecially when offered in Places ſet apart for his Service: *There hath he promiſed his Bleſſing, and life for evermore.*

If in our Diſtreſſes we flie for Refuge to the Altar; if under the apprehenſion of Puniſhment, which our ſins moſt righteouſly deſerve, we take Sanctuary at the Houſe of God, our Strength, our Redemption will not fail us. Thither does

does God oblige us to repair; and he will certainly bleſs the means, which himſelf preſcribes.

'Tis true, when Men draw nigh to God with their Mouths, and honour him with their Lips, while their Heart is far from, and does deſpite unto him, he rejects ſuch their Hypocritical Addreſſes, and angrily demands, who hath required theſe things at your Hands, to tread my Courts? Oblations are vain, Incenſe an Abomination to him, when not Sanctified by Affection, Faith, and Devotion.

Whatever ſturdy Conceit ſome Men entertain, that being once choſen for God's People, they cannot be forſaken by him, that he is bound by ſtronger ties to reſide among, and protect them, conſtrained with more laſting Cords, than thoſe with which the fond madneſs of certain *Heathens* ſhackled the Images of their Gods, thereby to ſecure the charm'd Inhabitants: however with the *Jews* (*Jer.* 7.) after notorious Provocations they *come and ſtand before the Lord in the Houſe,*

Houſe, which is called by his Name, and ſay, we are delivered to doe all theſe Abominations; yet let them know, that, if not
1 Pet. 4. 17. averted, *Judgment muſt begin at the Houſe of God*, and will be moſt ſeverely executed upon them, that profane his Glory by their wicked Approaches.

The repeated Tranſgreſſions of unrighteous Worſhippers *force* the Lord to an abhorrence even of his own Sanctuaries. So, in puniſhment to the ſtubborn *Jews*, he permitted the Ark, where he had put his Name, and more Majeſtick Preſence, to be taken Captive: and, notwithſtanding their frequent Boaſts of *the Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord*, he gave way for *Antiochus* to profane, for *Titus* totally to deſtroy it.

Though *Jacob* were his Portion, and *Iſrael* the Lot of his Inheritance, yet they, the living Temple of the Lord, by unſincere Worſhip provoked him, after ſundry manners to *ſet himſelf in array*
Pſal. 78. 38. *againſt them, to ſtir up all his Wrath*, and
——50. *make a Way to his Anger*, clear the Paſſage,

that

that nothing ſhould obſtruct the full courſe of it. Nay, he proceeded ſo far, as to *laugh at the Calamities* which he brought upon them, to *mock when their fear came*; and ſarcaſtically bid them, *prepare to meet thy God O* Iſrael. Alas, Amos 4. 12. what preparation can Duſt and Aſhes make, wherewith to meet and withſtand an angry God? Lord, what is Man, impotent Man that he ſhould contend with an Almighty Creator? *Wherewithall ſhall we come before*, and meet him, except as *Jacob* met *Eſau* (Gen. 32.) with Prayers and Supplications, that we may find favour in his ſight? Thus, onely thus, may we imitate that Patriarch, *wreſtle with God, and prevail.*

Come then, and let us reverently Worſhip the Lord *in the midſt of the Congregation*, being aſſured that for his Goodneſs ſake he will not, for his Promiſe ſake he cannot, refuſe to hear and be gratious to ſincere Devotions. *Holineſs becometh*, and Goodneſs dwells in *his* Pſal. 93. 5. *Houſe for ever. How amiable are thy Ta-* Pſal. 84. 1. *bernacles O Lord of Hoſts!* here *Mercy and* Pſal. 85. 9, 10.

Truth meet together, when *Truth flouriſheth out of the Earth*, Mercy *looks down from Heaven.*

As a ſenſible Inſtance of God's favourable acceptance of ſupplicatory Addreſſes at the Temple, when the *Jews* went up to *Jeruſalem* to make them, their Concerns were ſafe at home, though left without a Guard, neither incident Calamities befell them, nor the *Philiſtines*, or other bitter Enemies could then moleſt them; the Lord was a Shield, the God of *Jacob* a Defence to them, while employed in his Worſhip. *Hannah's* Womb was opened, and ſhe delivered of the Child *Samuel* in return of her Vow at the yearly Sacrifice in *Shiloh*; and, by devoting him to the Service of the Altar, ſhe, that had been called Barren, became a joyfull Mother of five Children more. The Promiſe of *John Baptiſt's* Birth was made to *Zacharias*, when he gave attendance in the Temple. So certain it is, that God will be found of thoſe that ſeek him in his own Ordinances, that he will give a particular Bleſſing both Temporal

1 Sam. 1.

1 Sam. 2.

Luke 1.

poral and Eternal to them, which call upon him in the Place, that he chuſeth and ſanctifieth *to put his Name there.* It will therefore become us, when we go into the Lord's Courts, to cry out with *Jacob* awakened from ſleep, *ſurely the Lord is in this Place; how dreadfull is this Place? This is none other but the Houſe of God, and this is the Gate of Heaven.* Open, be ye open ye everlaſting Doors above, and the Servants of the King of Glory, that reverently Worſhip him in his dwelling Places below, after ſeveral Earneſts of his Favour here, ſhall enter in, and enjoy him to all Eternity. Gen. 28. 17.

Having ſpoken to the three Particulars propoſed, according to the method laid down;

I am now to make a very brief Application

Of the two former jointly, *to raiſe our Devotion,* when we come into the Lord's Houſe.

Of the latter *to quicken our Faith,* that he will hear and anſwer the devout Petitions which we there make.

1. Since Men through all Ages have thought it their Duty, and God requires to Chuſe and Sanctify Places for his publick Worſhip, where his Honour and Gratious Preſence vouchſafe to dwell, *We muſt draw near with Reverence. The place where we ſtand is holy ground.* The Majeſty of the great Creator fills, and the loweſt Proſtrations of his Creatures beſt ſuit with our Approaches to it.

'Tis obſervable, that the *Chymiſt* in thoſe who ſeek his fanſied Stone, the *Philoſopher* in them who ſearch after that better Treaſure Truth, and even the *Turks* in thoſe who but look on the Alchoran, expect unblameable Holineſs. What awfull Piety then ſhould enlarge, tranſport our Hearts, when we, the animated Duſt of God's Foot-ſtool, have not a *diſtant* view of, but are admitted boldly to come up to the Throne of his Grace, and of his Glory?

The weak ſhadows of which Glory have overwhelmed the Sons of Men with Dread and Aſtoniſhment. When *Moſes* came down from converſing with God,

God, *the Glory of his Countenance was such, that the Children of* Iſrael *could not ſtedfaſtly behold his Face.* When the Glory of the Lord overſpread Mount *Sinai* at the Delivery of the Commandments, the *Iſraelites*, though Sanctified, and three Days fitted by Divine Appointment for the ſight, yea, and *Moſes* himſelf *exceedingly feared and quaked.* Nay, the Obſcurities of mortal Fleſh, and the humble Circumſtances under which the Son of God was pleaſed to take it, did not ſo far eclipſe the brightneſs of his Glory, the expreſs Image of his Perſon, but that, when now near to die as a Malefactour, a *gentle* Anſwer in the Garden ſtruck the rough Soldiers into a Trance, and a *mild* caſt of his Eye at the Bar, diſſolved the treacherous St. *Peter* into a floud of Tears. Theſe dark diſtant Repreſentations being ſo full of Glory, how great muſt be that Glory, when more eminently diſplayed in the *Place* of it's *Reſidence*? Such the Church will be taken to be by a true Chriſtian's Faith, who there ſees God reconciled, Principalities,

2 Cor. 3. 7.

Exodus 19.

Heb. 12. 21.

John 18. 6.

Luke 22. 61, 62.

palities, and Powers dethron'd, and all the other bleſſed effects of our Redeemer's
Acts 7. 55. Merits; and, *looking up ſtedfaſtly into Heaven with St.* Stephen, beholds *the Glory of God, and Jeſus ſtanding at the Right Hand of God.* With what Humility, Awe, and Veneration ſhould we then proſtrate our Bodies, and elevate our
Pſal. 29. 9. Souls, to *ſpeak of his Glory in the Temple,*
Pſal. 22. 22. to ſupplicate and *praiſe him in the midſt of the great Congregation?*

2. Since God has promiſed particularly to regard, and to be affectionately gratious to Devout Petitions, which are offered in his own Houſe, *We muſt approach with Faith.* Whatever Doubts of Acceptance former Rebellions, whatever Diſcouragements preſent Difficulties, ſcatter to obſtruct, or ſtagger a Chriſtian's Faith, yet is it glorioufly built up, and confirmed by, borrows Life and Vigour from God's Promiſe of eſpecial favour to them, that diligently ſeek him in the place which is called by his Name. From hence it enlivens, and tranſports a Pious Soul, wings Devotion, joins with the Heavenly

Heavenly Quire in *ſinging Praiſes and Thankſgivings to him that ſitteth upon the Throne, and to the Lamb*; rivals the Ardour of flaming *Seraphims*; and all this Rapture and Ecſtaſie, while with the two *Cherubims* in the Ark of the Tabernacle (*Ex.* 37.) we ſurround the *Mercy-ſeat.* Let us therefore, in this goodly Seat of his Mercy, and of his Glory, make our humble Supplications unto him, as *Solomon* did at the Conſecration of the Temple, *O Lord God of* Iſrael, *have reſpect to the Prayers of thy Servants, that thine Eyes may be open upon this Houſe Day and Night,* which thou haſt Choſen and Sanctified to the Honour of thy Name. 2 Chron. 6. 19, 20.

THE END.